Dereservation of cloth reserved for Handloom Sector

2405. SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANA RAO: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of suicides and hunger deaths of handloom workers in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh due to lack of employment was eight during this year;

(b) whether it is also a fact dereservation of 22 types of cloth reserved for the handloom sector posed a threat to handloom industry;

(c) what steps Government propose to take to clear the huge stocks of handloom cloth lying uncleared with weavers' societies and master veawers; and

(d) whether Government propose to take immediate steps to provide work to handloom workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM): (a) No, Sir. However, it has been reported that the livelihood of the handloom weavers in the Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh has been badly affected due to the slump in demand for lungies.

(b) The petitions filed by powerloom interests questioning the Constitutional validity of the provisions of Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985, under which 22 items of cotton, silk, wool and blends have been reserved for exclusive production in the handloom sector, is pending before the Supreme Court for its verdict. As such, there is no proposal to dereserve 22 items reserved for exclusive production in the handloom sector.

(c) In order to assist the handloom agencies to clear the huge inventories of handloom cloth lying with them, a special rebate 20 per cent, to be equally shared between the Central and State Governments, on the sales effected in National Handloom Expos approved and organised by Development Commissioner for Handlooms.

(d) After obtaining a report from Government of Andhra Pradesh, the State Government was requested to send specific proposals to provide relief to the affected weavers. The Central Government have already released a sum of Rs. 60.00 lakhs as special advance for providing gainful employment to the unemployed weavers as a measure to ameliorate the distress conditions of the handloom weavers in Prakasam Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh. To examine the possibility of providing export avenues to the products of the weavers of Chirala, the Central Govt. has also deputed an officer of Handicrafts and Handlooms Export Corportion of India, who has placed sample order with the weavers agencies in Chirala.

Electronic devices with Punjab Terrorists

2406. SHRI KAPIL VERMA:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of reports that Punjab terrorists have acquired sophisitcated electronic devices to carry out remote controlled bomb attacks in the Capital particularly on VVIPs;

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to counter such measures; and

(c) whether such remote controlled bomb attacks have already been made on mobile patrols of the security agencies in Punjab and if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI Y. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Appropriate steps have been taken in this regard.

(c) A police patrolling party was attacked by some terrorists with remote control bombs in Majitha near Amritsar. Two PHG jawans were killed and one Asstt. Sub-Inspector and two PHG jawans were injured. One police jeep was also damaged.

Counter-trade with Bofors

2407. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA:
SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the counter-trade with Bofors was discussed at an early stage of the contract, so as to know from different parties as to who offered the best package to India, or it was discussed at a very late stage when the negotiations for the contract had been practically completed; and

(b) if discussed at a late stage, what are the reasons for which all possible other parties were not explored at an early stage so as to have the best package in India's interest and what have been the consequences of such an exploration having not been made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) and (b) Counter-trade package was sought immediately on commencement of technical and commercial negotiation in December, 1985 with the two short listed firms. The counter-trade package considered better was accepted.

Malpractices by Non-resident Indians in collusion with Banks

2408. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA:
SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report published in the Indian Express dated the 14th January, 1989 stating that many leading international banks and also overseas branches of some of the Government owned Indian banks in collusion with some 'syndicates' of powerful non-resident Indians, are pocketing and sharing around Rs. 130 crore every year from the Government offered 1.5 to 2 percent higher interest over the rate prevailing in the international market under the two schemes; i.e. Foreign Currency Non-Resident Deposits and Non-Resident Rupee Account;

(b) if so, what are the facts in this regard and steps taken to stop this differential interest out-flow through the above mentioned collusion; and

(c) whether about 80 percent of the funds in these schemes are held by a few high-value accounts, which can put Government to ransom by sudden with-drawals; if so, what precautionary steps have been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During 1985, some irregularities in this regard were brought to the notice of the Reserve Bank of India. Accordingly RBI have already issued instructions to all Indian banks having foreign branches and foreign banks operating in India in this regard.